



HOLY THURSDAY
MARCH 28, 2024
6:00 PM

NATIVITY LUTHERAN CHURCH
Reverend Giuseppe Mattei



INTRODUCTION

Ed Lewis & Deacon Clyde Rosten

Please stand as you are able and turn towards the baptismal font and look toward the cross as it processes toward the altar.

PROCESSIONAL HYMN *Will You Let Me Be Your Servant*

659

1 Will you let me be your ser - vant, let me be as
2 We are pil - grims on a jour - ney, we are trav - 'lers
3 I will hold the Christ-light for you in the night - time
4 I will weep when you are weep - ing; when you laugh I'll
5 Will you let me be your ser - vant, let me be as

Christ to you? Pray that I may have the grace to
on the road; we are here to help each oth - er
of your fear; I will hold my hand out to you,
laugh with you. I will share your joy and sor - row
Christ to you? Pray that I may have the grace to

let you be my ser - vant, too.
walk the mile and bear the load.
speak the peace you long to hear.
till we've seen this jour - ney through.
let you be my ser - vant, too.

THE GATHERING
The Holy Spirit calls us
together as the people of God.

We are gathered in the name of + the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

Holy God, Source of all love... one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Please be seated.

THE WORD
God speaks to us in scripture
readings, preaching, and song.

A READING FROM THE BOOK OF EXODUS

12:1-4.11-14

Reader Kathy Mullins

¹The LORD said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt: ²This month shall mark for you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year for you. ³Tell the whole congregation of Israel that on the tenth of this month they are to take a lamb for each family, a lamb for each household. ⁴If a household is too small for a whole lamb, it shall join its closest neighbor in obtaining one; the lamb shall be divided in proportion to the number of people who eat of it. ¹¹This is how you shall eat it: your loins girded, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your

hand; and you shall eat it hurriedly. It is the passover of the LORD. ¹²For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will strike down every firstborn in the land of Egypt, both human beings and animals; on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments: I am the LORD. ¹³The blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you live: when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague shall destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt. ¹⁴This day shall be a day of remembrance for you. You shall celebrate it as a festival to the LORD; throughout your generations you shall observe it as a perpetual ordinance.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

PSALM

116:1-2, 12-19

¹I love the LORD, who has heard my voice,
and listened to my supplication,
²**for the LORD has given ear to me whenever I called.**

¹²How shall I repay the LORD
for all the good things God has done for me?

¹³**I will lift the cup of salvation
and call on the name of the LORD.**

¹⁴I will fulfill my vows to the LORD
in the presence of all God's people.

¹⁵**Precious in your sight, O LORD,
is the death of your servants.**

¹⁶O LORD, truly I am your servant;
I am your servant, the child of your handmaid; you have freed me
from my bonds.

¹⁷**I will offer you the sacrifice of thanksgiving
and call upon the name of the LORD.**

¹⁸I will fulfill my vows to the LORD
in the presence of all God's people,

¹⁹in the courts of the LORD's house,
in the midst of you, O Jerusalem.

**A READING FROM THE FIRST LETTER
OF PAUL TO THE CORINTHIANS**

11:23-26

Reader: Kathy Mullins

²³For I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread,
²⁴and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." ²⁵In the same way he took the cup also, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."
²⁶For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Please stand as you are able.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Lenten Refrain

Return to the Lord

S 151b

Re - turn to the Lord, your God, for he is gra - cious and mer - ci - ful,

slow to an - ger, and a - bound - ing in stead - fast love.

The holy gospel according to John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹Now before the festival of the Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart from this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. ²The devil had already put it into the heart of Judas son of Simon Iscariot to betray him. And during supper ³Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, ⁴got up from the table, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. ⁵Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him. ⁶He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" ⁷Jesus answered, "You do not know now what I am doing, but later you will understand." ⁸Peter said to him, "You will never wash my feet." Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no share with me." ⁹Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!" ¹⁰Jesus said to him, "One who has bathed does not need to wash, except for the feet, but is entirely clean. And you are clean, though not all of you." ¹¹For he knew who was to betray him; for this reason he said, "Not all of you are clean." ¹²After he had washed their feet, had put on his robe, and had returned to the table, he said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you?" ¹³You call me Teacher and Lord—and you are right, for that is what I am. ¹⁴So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. ¹⁵For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you. ¹⁶Very truly, I tell you, servants are not greater than their master, nor are messengers greater than the one who sent them. ¹⁷If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them."

^{31b}"Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. ³²If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him in

himself and will glorify him at once. ³³Little children, I am with you only a little longer. You will look for me; and as I said to the Jews so now I say to you, 'Where I am going, you cannot come.' ³⁴I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. ³⁵By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

The gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

Please be seated.

SERMON

Please stand as you are able.

HYMN OF THE DAY

Restore in Us, O God

328



1 Re - store in us, O God, the splen - dor of your love; re -
 2 O Spir - it, wake in us the won - der of your pow'r; from
 3 Bring us, O Christ, to share the full - ness of your joy; bap -
 4 Three-per - soned God, ful - fill the prom - ise of your grace, that



new your im - age in our hearts, and all our sins re - move.
 fruit-less fear un - furl our lives like spring-time bud and flow'r.
 tize us in the ris - en life that death can - not de - stroy.
 we, when all our search-ing ends, may see you face to face.

INVITATION TO CONFESSION

How is it people will recognize us as followers of Jesus? Simply by how we treat one another. Let us confess how we have not loved as Christ loves us.

Creator and Loving God, You kneel to wash our feet, **yet we are reluctant for You to see all the places we have gone in our attempts to escape You.**

You would bathe us in the warm, living waters of your love, **and yet we favor the puddles of temptation.**

We have received all the gifts You have to offer, **yet we are tempted to think they are only for us, rather than sharing them.**

Forgive us, Holy One, and have mercy on us.

What can we give You for all your wonderful graciousness towards us?

As You have broken your heart open for us, **may we open ours in service to others.**

As You have given your life for us, **may we offer ours to bring healing to the world.**

As You have called us together around your table, **may we commit to feeding a world hungry, not only for food, but for that Spirit which brings peace and reconciliation.**

This we pray as servants of Jesus Christ, who came to serve us in life, in death, and in resurrection hope.

Silence is kept for personal reflection.

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

On this holiest of nights, we have received the good news: God has come in Christ Jesus, to fill us with hope and peace, to bathe us in grace and mercy.

**In remembrance, we go forth:
to bring hope where despair resides;
to be servants to those who are broken;
to love as selflessly as we are loved by Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. Amen.**

Please be seated.



FOOTWASHING

Footwashing is a powerful symbolic response to the Word, dramatizing the servanthood of Jesus, both on the night before his death and in his continuing presence in our midst.

We come forth, O Lord, barely grasping the importance of the moment. Open our mind to your sacrificial love. Here are your humble servants; **here is the towel with which we wash the feet of the broken-hearted; here is the basin which cleanses the stains of the world.**

PLEASE, COME FORWARD AS MOVED BY THE SPIRIT OF CHRIST.

When the footwashing is over, please stand as you are able.

THE PEACE

Lord Jesus Christ, who said to your Apostles, "Peace I leave you, my peace I give you;" look not on our sins, but on the faith of your Church, and graciously grant her peace and unity in accordance with your will. You live and reign forever and ever. **Amen.**

The peace of the Lord be with you always.
And with your spirit.

Let us offer each other the sign of peace.

Please be seated.

THE MEAL
God feeds us with the presence
of Jesus Christ.

OFFERING

You may drop your offering in the basket by the exit door or at the office during the week. You may also donate on-line at <https://www.nlcww.org>, or on our Facebook page. Now you may also contribute using Venmo or Zelle if you have an account or using the QR code below.



Assisting Minister unveils the chalice and paten.

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray.

Jesus, You are the Bread of life and the Host of this meal. **Bless these gifts that we have gathered that all people may know your goodness. Feed us not only with this holy food but with hunger for justice and peace. We pray this in your name. Amen.**

Please stand as you are able.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

It was the beginning of hope on that night long ago, Liberating God, as You prepared to lead your people to freedom.

As they readied themselves, You fed them with your unblemished grace, so all sin, pain, and bitterness could be set down and left behind when it was time to follow You.

It was the beginning of salvation on that night long ago, Servant Lord, as You prepared your disciples for all the things which were to happen. **You humbled yourself by washing their feet, so they could follow You in service and love to a world which would reject You and hang You on a cross.**

We tell these stories once again on this night of remembrance. Here is the Bread which gives us life; here is the Cup which quenches our thirst for justice.

Prepare us for our journey of discipleship, God of Community, Holy One, as we pray as our Servant, Jesus Christ, teaches us, saying,

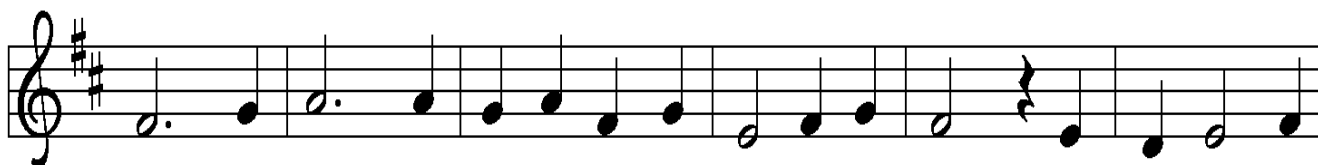
Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Bread for the journey. A feast for hungry hearts. Come! Guests and friends of any age and background, take your place at the table!

You may be seated. The ushers will invite each row to come to the altar. You may stand or kneel at the communion rail and receive bread and wine (or request a gluten free host and/or grape juice). Please let an usher know if you cannot come to the altar to receive communion. We will have communion brought to you.

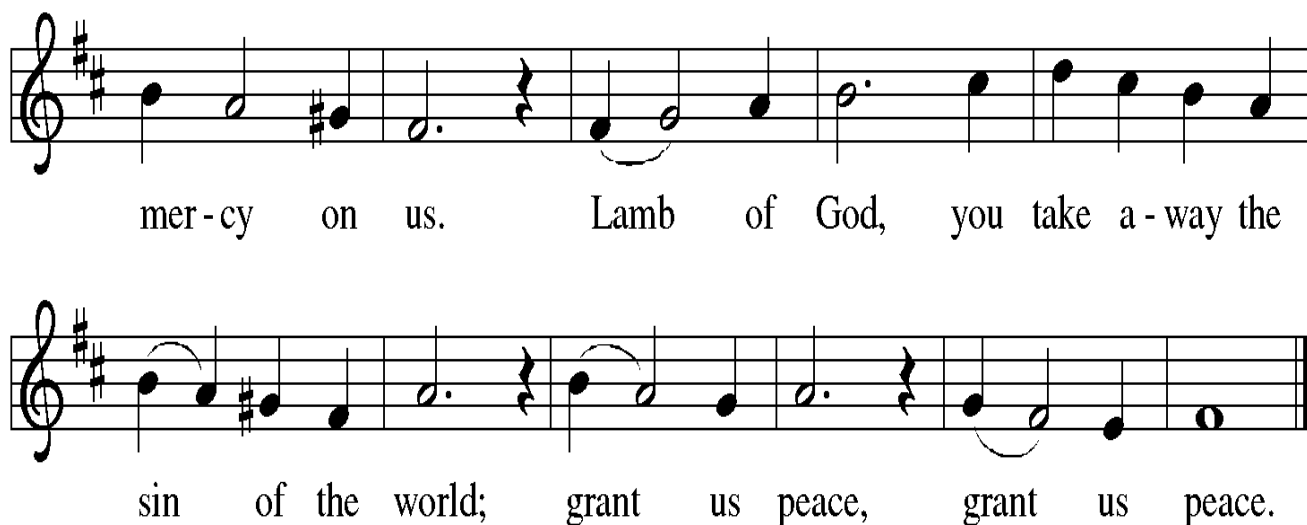
Lamb of God



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on



us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have



COMMUNION HYMNS

471, 323, 483, 612

Please stand as you are able.

TABLE BLESSING

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace. **Amen.**

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray.

Lord Jesus, in a wonderful sacrament You strengthen us with the saving power of your suffering, death, and resurrection. **May this sacrament of your body and blood so work in us that the fruits of your redemption will show forth in the way we live, for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

Please be seated.

STRIPPING OF THE WORSHIP SPACE

The ancient practice of stripping the Lord's table and sanctuary following communion is a vivid and dramatic way of showing the desolation and abandonment of the long night in Gethsemane and what followed.

As the worship space is stripped, Psalm 22 is sung.

PSALM 22

Janet Holly

There is no benediction this evening. After the worship leaders have left the sanctuary, all depart in silence.



Presiding Minister
Assisting Ministers

Reverend Giuseppe Mattei
Deacon Charlotte Downing
Robert Rios

Introduction Readers

Ed Lewis

Scripture Reader
Ushers

Deacon Clyde Rosten
Kathy Mullins

Lou Prettyman & Robert Rios

Acolyte/Crucifer

Lou Prettyman

Music Director

Donna Olsen

Bell Choir Directors

Janet & Todd Holly

Altar Guild

Janet Jones, Noel Prettyman & Robert Rios

AV Director

Art Alt

Audio

Pat Squires

Cameras

Tim Cotter & Mark Major

Graphics

Diane Alt, Ed Lewis & Linda Rizzo

Video Production

Vicki Page

OUR VALUES STATEMENT:

We recognize that we are not here by chance but are gathered together to be the church of God in Christ.

We recognize that God is making us, through grace, into a fellowship that embodies and expresses the spirit of Christ.

In this fellowship, there is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male or female, for all of us are one in Christ Jesus (Galatians 3:28). We, therefore, welcome equally all people, regardless of religious office, position, possessions, education, race, age, gender, sexual orientation, mental ability, physical ability or other distinctions. (Adopted 9/7/07)

VISION STATEMENT:

We seek to become people who live the nativity by...

Working as a supportive family of faith to extend God's gracious welcome through worship, community service, and spiritual growth opportunities.

**NATIVITY LUTHERAN CHURCH OF WEEKI WACHEE
A CONGREGATION OF THE FLORIDA-BAHAMAS SYNOD OF
THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**

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Reverend Giuseppe Mattei

Deacon Charlotte Downing

Deacon Clyde Rosten

Music Director: Donna Olsen

Audio/Visual Director: Art Alt

Bell Choir Directors: Janet & Todd Holly

Sunday Service at 9:30 a.m.

